THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE;

OR

Literary Miscellany.

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For the Evening Fire-side.

THE PHILANTHROPIST: NO IV.

"L'amitie est la production de l'amour propre."

As every error is either an immediate or more remote cause of misery, to pursue this *fiend* through all her mazy windings, to trace her to her lurking-places, and to drag her into view, is worthy the labour of the Philanthropist. I shall not attempt to enumerate the various ways by which our fallible race have been entangled in error, nor to describe the consequences of our multiplied infirmities. There is, however, one mistake, which has so generally obtained that I shall employ a paper in directing our attention to it.

FRIENDSHIP, we know, has been classed with those sublimer virtues which do honor to our species—it has been extolled as one of the highest refinements of human nature; but I have no doubt that a more minute attention to the subject, will convince us that the position is unfounded. Notwithstanding what all its advocates have advanced to the contrary, I am still of the sentiment that Friendship is no virtue at all.

I shall in the first place endeavor to confirm my position by noticing the profound silence our Saviour observed on this subject. His whole life and manners were one uniform comment on the virtues in general, and all his sentiments illustrated or enforced them. To suppose, therefore, that a virtue of so much importance, as is generally attached to friendship, should have *entirely* escaped his notice, is incompatible with that acute penetration which every where discovers itself in his intercourse with mankind. But this position receives additional support from several expressions that fell from his lips, and from the more extensive utility which all the doctrines of the Gospel evidently intend. It is one remarkable distinction of our divine Religion, that it excludes every narrow view and selfish attachment; its precepts extend to every class of Society, and teach a more sublime Charity than *that* which would confine itself to a circle of friends, or the narrower limits of a single individual. But friendship is evidently of this description; a reciprocation of benefits, a mere selfish attachment, which continues no longer than interest or gratification secures the tie.

I confess there is a pride in our nature that shrinks from such a position; and to a superficial observer it may appear to want foundation. In support of it, I shall quote a passage from the writings of the celebrated Dr. Johnson, whose opinion will have more weight, because it was not expressed for the purpose of supporting a sentiment like mine. "Friendship," says he, "is seldom lasting but between equals, or when the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration, but commonly take away that easy familiarity of intercourse without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship." This penetrating philosopher evidently viewed it as a selfish tie, and furnishes additional proof to my argument, where, in another place, he says that "the fondest and firmest friendships are dissolved by such openness and sincerity as interrupt our enjoyment of our own approbation." Yet this is that virtue which, though bearing the indubitable stamp of selfishness, has been eulogized by almost every adventurer in the paths of literature, and sung by every tottering rhymer at the *foot* of Parnassus.

Our Lord, in his ever memorable Sermon on the mount, queries with his auditory in this remarkable manner: "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the Publicans the same?" Yet where is the friendship that extends to those who hate us? Such a friendship is in itself a solecism. How clearly he points to a more exalted affection, I leave my readers to judge.

Soame Jenyns, in his "Internal Evidence," has a remark so much to the point, that I shall quote it, as a further proof of the correctness of my opinion. "Friendship," says he, "in its utmost purity, deserves no recommendation from the christian religion."

I am aware that some passages in the New-Testament have been adduced in support of a contrary sentiment; such as, our Lord's attachment to the *beloved* disciple, and his peculiar affection for Lazarus and his amiable sisters: but as I can neither discover nor admit any selfish motive in these attachments, I think they may be fairly attributed to the superior virtues of these distinguished persons. Piety, Integrity, and Faithfulness to our known duties, will ever insure the divine favour. But in considering this subject, we should carefully distinguish between the love of virtue, and the selfish origin of friendship. It is evident that we may love and admire the amiable qualities of an Individual with whom we have no acquaintance; and, on the other side, Friendship is frequently known to subsist where there is little virtue.

There is, however, a *love* recommended in the inspired writings, which may be mistaken for friendship; but which is far more dignified in its nature, and more worthy that perfect religion which first taught man to *love even his enemies*: When this is the ground of our attachments, I acknowledge them worthy of the Gospel, and view them indeed as a bright ornament of our nature. The extension of such connexions would gradually harmonize the world; the sword, that is now reeking in human blood, would soon be sheathed, and "the nations would learn war no more." No jarring in-

terests could dissolve this golden tie; but the *Philanthropist* would delight in beholding on earth a glorious type of heaven; the happy reign of Harmony and Peace.

Friendship is the child of Nature; but this love is the offspring of heaven; the one shall desert us in the day of adversity, the other shall soothe our griefs in the hour of affliction. It is unjust to assign to a selfish principle the divine attributes of a love that extends even to those who persecute us, and by confounding the meaning of terms, the vicious man may suppose he has the virtues of the Good; but, though *vice* and *friendship* may go hand in hand, the virtuous alone can maintain and enjoy this delightful and unchanging affection. V.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

In days, when Poesy was young,
When none but Fancy's children sung,
The bards bedeck'd their lovely Queen
With every grace, of form and mein.
Her head was crown'd with blushing flowers,
Stol'n from the Muses' rosy bowers;
Her face, like youthful Hebe's, sweet,
In measure mov'd her airy feet:
While hovering round the heav'nly maid,
A thousand nameless graces play'd,
And rapt attention silent hung
Upon the music of her tongue.

But Poesy has laid aside
These trappings of poetic pride;
Has quite abjur'd that maiden grace,
That elegance of form and face:
Torn from her brow those blushing flow'rs,
Erst blooming in Parnassian bow'rs:
Forgot her robes, and, strange to tell,
Is naked as a modern Belle!

Thus stript, she moves with hoyder air,
Unblushing front, and dauntless stare;
And charms our more discerning ears
With quaint remarks and critic sneers.
Well practis'd in each quibbling art,
Plain sense and language to pervert,
When modest merit claims the bays,
The broad satyric laugh to raise,
With candour, and good sense at strife,
And ev'ry grace that sweetens life.

Thus dizen'd out in modern charms,
Each grave Invisible, she warms;
Displays her newly fashion'd pride,
And sparkles at your "*Fire-side.*"

'Tis thus the lovely rural maid,
In nature's genuine charms array'd,
With graceful form, and gentle air,
And melting eye, and shining hair:
And cheeks, which scorn all other dye,
Than blooming health, and modesty;
Each gazer's raptur'd bosom warms,
With beauty's own resistless charms.

Her slender arms, and ivory neck,
Not India's glowing treasures deck;
Nor round their polish'd surface twines
The product of Peruvian mines:
Nor does her ear, of nicest mould,
Sustain the ring of burnish'd gold.
Easy, and fanciful, and chaste,
Her dress displays a polish'd taste;
And, who can tell what melodies,
In circling eddies round us rise,
When, roving o'er the verdant plain,
From coral lips she pours the strain!

But, strange to tell! in evil hour,
E'en in the zenith of her power,
To crown the triumph of her foes,
To Town the peerless beauty goes.

The busy Nymphs around her press,
All pleas'd to regulate her dress:
Those tresses, erst with chaplets gay,
(Ah! cruel!) must be shorn away;
And round her brow, and temples fair,
Must curl a length of foreign hair.
Her neck, which sham'd the virgin snow,
And grac'd the cheeks' enchanting glow,
Around that neck of fairy mould,
The masculine cravat they fold.

Obedient now to fashion's call,
She dances at the splendid ball,
The midnight Theatre attends,
And Health, and Time, profusely spends.
Thus, while her native charms decay,
Virtue and peace are thrown away:
Yet still, so blind are coxcombs' eyes,
New charms before them seem to rise:
New flatteries soothe her every hour,
And every day fresh crouds adore.

While, some few formal prigs like me,
Regret her lost simplicity:
Like me, her former charms deplore,
And sigh, that they return no more.

ALFRED.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

"'Tis Education makes or mars the man."

Messieurs Editors,

As it would be doing injustice to you and the public, to occupy any longer that place in your paper which ought to be filled with the lucubrations of your friend the PHILANTHROPIST, I take the liberty of addressing what I have to say in reply to his Fair Correspondent, to you. I have another motive still stronger, though more selfish, than the former. I am unfortunately a very modest man; and the severe trial to which my modesty was exposed by his flattering introduction to my first performance, made me unwilling to hazard a repetition of his civility.

However incompetent I may be to defend the opinions which I have avowed, it would be an act of cowardice to shrink from the task, though all the *rays* of *genius* that dazzle this western hemisphere were converged to the point of opposition. And it would be an outrage against the rules of gallantry more abominable than that of the philosopher which SELINA has mentioned, if her observations should suffer the contemptuousness of silence. That she has displayed great ingenuity, and uncommon sprightliness, none will deny: but that she has been unfortunate in *adducing instances* to illustrate the illusions of prejudice, and confirm the decisions made too precipitately in the unenquiring mind, I shall endeavor to make appear.

The great Newton, "the discoverer of new worlds, and the explainer of their various movements," was, when a schoolboy, thought by his cotemporaries (who had imbibed those false notions concerning the unequal distribution of intellectual powers) to be quite below mediocrity. Yet notwithstanding this circumstance—notwithstanding the unpromising symptoms that marked the puerile efforts of this great philosopher, we find that by intense application, (and intense it must have been, that left no opening for the reception of common decency of manners) he ascended by the path which he himself marked out to that pinnacle of eminence to which he aspired.

SELINA acknowledges that the powers of the *petit Maitres* of the present day are *enfeebled.* We may fairly infer from this that nature has not been deficient in her bounty: therefore if an injudicious education has enfeebled the powers which are equally bestowed on all, her ladyship should not call them "mere clods," but spoiled clods "of the valley." "I should be sorry," says SELINA, "to repress emulation; for we know not, till the experiment is made, what are our talents; and many a gem lies buried in the mine which, if removed from its darkened quarry, would dazzle the world with its brilliancy." I quoted the above sentence because I admire it. I will now quote another, which I think still more elegant; hoping, at the same time that I am regaling my readers with the flowers of her rhetoric, to convince them that even SELINA cannot preserve consistency when engaged in a bad cause. "However depressed by circumstances or situation, genius will ever rise buoyant above surrounding obstacles, and will ever, by its brilliancy, gild its retreat, as the sun however obscured by a dark summer cloud, yet betrays his station in the heavens, by illuminating its skirts with gold.

I did not allude to such *arts* as making pins and needles in my former essay, as SELINA has insinuated by fabricating a sentence or two upon such a supposition. Neither did I assert that the Chinese were the most enterprizing people in the world. I believe very satisfactory reasons might be given why they are not so, without denying them *native talents*. It is certain that many of the most important discoveries and improvements were stumbled upon by accident, and some of them by the illiterate and *unfavoured* part of mankind. "We may store our minds with the wisdom of the ancients, and the improvements of the moderns; we may amass a *huge pile;* but without the talents to arrange it, it will be but a rude unprofitable mass; and only incumber, when it ought to enrich." Of this kind of incumbrance I should be very fond to bear the burthen. That we should be capable of acquiring and retaining knowledge, and not be capable of using it to advantage when in our possession, is a mystery I cannot comprehend.

"True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
"As those move easiest who have learnt to dance."
POPE.

'Tis *art*, not *nature*, that teaches us to design with energy, and perform with elegance. 'Tis *art*, not *nature*, "that enchants us in the exquisite tones of harmony, and enraptures the sense in the sweet flow of poetry."

"Without native talent no exquisite enjoyment can be derived from any production." *Selina* has derived exquisite enjoyment from the productions of SPERMACETI CANDLE, as the plaudits which she lavishes upon that writer, (the propriety or justice of which I am not disposed to call in question) loudly testify. *Selina*, therefore, according to her own account, is one of the *favoured few*, whom nature has endowed with an extraordinary portion of intellect. Such *liberality* in DAME NATURE, I should suppose would be too *illiberal* to meet the approbation of any one, or even to be admitted amongst probabilities, without the strictest scrutiny, the unveiling powers of which it cannot stand the test.

The circumstance mentioned by SELINA, of the stupid man who had his skull fractured, furnishes a thought that perhaps may be improved to advantage. If he really, at the intervals she speaks of, displayed universal knowledge; if his mind was stored with that variety which made all classes seek his society, and human means had not been resorted to, to render him thus accomplished, I should be induced to think that his talents were *quite* supernatural. Otherwise I should feel it my duty to recommend to those who feel themselves brain-bound, to get their skulls fractured.

"Without native talent, no exquisite enjoyment can be derived from any production." Yet "all were born to be equally happy." Though the fair correspondent of the PHILANTHROPIST can tell a story much more gracefully than I can, and though she is so justly entitled to the praise of ingenuity which he so *profusely lavished* upon me; yet I think it would require more sophistry than he seems willing to acknowledge has fallen to his share, and more ingenuity than even she possesses, to reconcile the sentiments contained in the two sentences just quoted, with the opinion that all are not equally capable of becoming "gems," under the operation of a judicious polish.

"I fully believe," says SELINA, "that a good providence has placed happiness equally within the reach of all, if they will exert themselves to attain it." How so! if knowledge, which is a never failing source of happiness to its possessors, is a blessing which only a few, a *favored few*, can partake in. If genius, or a capacity to acquire, retain, and *use*, *judiciously*, whatever adds to the dignity and usefulness of a human being, is only bestowed that the possessors may glitter at the expence of the unfortunate, whom no polish can qualify for a more dignified office than heightening, by contrast, the *lustre* of the *illustrious*. "Without native talent no exquisite enjoyment can be derived from any production." How unfortunate are the multitude destined to be, who do not rise above mediocrity; unprivileged to claim a share in the dignity which every rational being ought to consider as his right, and unqualified to enjoy the pleasures presented by others, which they ought, by an equal distribution of justice, to have the power (in their turn) to bestow.

X.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

Messrs. Edidors,

When boldness of assertion constitutes criticism, and the evasion of a question its reply, I will admit the claim of your correspondent, ANONYMOUS, to the reputation of a critic. Till then, I beg to be excused. His condescending address to me, I shall not presume to answer; but to you I will offer such observations on his communication, as have suggested themselves in its perusal. It did not require any uncommon sagacity to perceive imperfections in my remarks on your "Literary Notice;" but although your correspondent, in this instance, failed to evince the superiority of his genius, his *elegant* and *applicable* simile of the "trickish Yankees" and their unsavoury herring, furnishes us with an indisputable proof of the *depth of his research*, and the *quickness* of his *conception*. It would have been descending from the commanding station he had assumed, to have particularized the defects, "the absurdities," in my composition to which he alluded. It was sufficient that he should assert their existence: the *unlettered vulgar*, doubtful of their own sagacity, and confiding in his discernment, would substitute credulity for conviction, and assent to a position too uncertain to be controverted. Such, undoubtedly, must have been the expectation of ANONYMOUS; for I cannot for a moment suspect him of distrusting his own abilities.

When I replied to your "Literary Notice" of AMERICAN LETTERS, I unhesitatingly avowed my limited acquaintance with that work. I did not attempt to criticise what I *had not read*, but merely commented on *what I had*. My observations were applicable to the work in the aggregate, in this point alone—that if I proved the inaccuracy of any one part, that inaccuracy must of consequence attach to the whole. Certainly the penetration of ANONYMOUS must have discovered what was obvious to *even a common* capacity, that my remarks were not designed to condemn the publication which was the subject of your praise, but to shew the impropriety of the unqualified approbation you bestowed.

I shall not imitate your correspondent in making round assertions, which it would be difficult to support, nor in evading a minute investigation of the subject of my remarks; neither shall I lay claim to the charity of my readers for any faults which I have sufficient ingenuity to hide. It remained for a modern genius, who possessed within him the *inherent qualifications* of a critic, to spurn the plain unadorned rules of the intelligent Blair. It remained for modern modesty to assert claims to *intuitive* critical genius, and at once render unnecessary the laborious investigation of a Kaime into the nature of language and composition. Admira-

ble critic! Nature to him has indeed been most bountiful. It is however an unfortunate circumstance that collateral evidence should arise from his own remarks, to annihilate his claims to *inherent* genius; to controvert his favorite maxims, and reduce him to a level with the common mass of mankind. It was indeed a cruel error, that, in endeavoring to establish his character as an *author* and a *critic*, he should forfeit his claim to the more mechanical merit of an *arithmetician* and a *merchant* To either of these a question may be proposed, which, but for the information of ANONYMOUS, I should be ashamed to ask—whether, in the solution of an account, however intricate, a recurrence to the first rules of arithmetic is not absolutely necessary? And what would we think of a captain, who, entrusted with the command of a vessel, was as confident in his own abilities, and entertained as hearty a contempt for the judgment of others as ANONYMOUS, and contemning the use of the chart and compass, boldly resolved to rely on "his own impressions of propriety," and dashed on, over sands and shoals, till he was surrounded by insuperable difficulties? Would not that man be more deserving of "qualified censure" than of unqualified approbation? What the "first rules of Dilworth" are in arithmetic, or the chart and the compass in navigation, the elementary maxims of Blair are in criticism and composition; and he is a daring adventurer who will treat them with contempt, or refuse them his attention. He, who, with a false pride, looks upon them as too simple to be necessary, deserves more than the painful consciousness of his own folly—the ridicule of the world.

"Surely," says your correspondent, "it is not from (meaning *by*) the European an American author may expect to be conducted to the temple of fame."—And why not? Because "the European is *accustomed* to his *prejudices*, and gives a *meagre* assent to the pretensions of America to rank among enlightened nations." It is a well attested fact that to American publications of *real merit*, the people of Europe have given that deserved applause which in many cases our own citizens have withheld. The absurd idea of the inferiority of American productions is universally exploded, and it is unjust to attribute to trans-Atlantic critics a partiality they do not discover. I am therefore sorry to say that this assertion of "Anonymous" is as destitute of foundation as the language in which he has clothed it is deficient in point of elegance.

The advocate of AMERICAN LETTERS proceeds to notice "two or three *little* errors" in my last communication. He objects to my finding fault with the *style*, because the authors of your "Literary notice" do not particularly praise it; but did they not praise the work *in toto?* and if I, or any one else, prove the style incorrect, does not such proof invalidate their criticism, or, more properly, their unqualified approbation? The remarks of *Anonymous* on the "*poor* sentence" in question display as much of fancy (witness his idea of bending over the tomb-stone of Gessner, *if he had any*) as his application and definition of "the term *bathos*," do of *exquisite* ingenuity; and his *admirable alliterative exclamation* of "O! blundering brother of the bathos bench," combined with the aforesaid qualifications of a poet, evidently discover that he would shine *more conspicuous* as a votary of the muses than as a commentator.

The whole of the work, so far as I had read, and not the particular "poor sentence" so often mentioned, was charged with *redundancy of style;* of a want of unity, this complicated sentence voluntarily pleads guilty, and needed not an arraignment at the bar of criticism; but my remarks were required by the "Literary notice." I have now done with *Anonymous*. Which of us better understandeth *the plain rules of Blair*, I leave to the judgment of the reader, and will merely suggest to him, whether the remarks on "my review of the reviewers" do not discover more of *mortification* than of candour or understanding.

"Y's" communication requires but a few words in reply. I disavow any hostility to *American Letters*, and sincerely hope they may have a brisk circulation, as I do not doubt they possess considerable interest, and the worth and acknowledged talents of the author will ensure them the perusal of men of taste. I am very far from wishing to apply to any, undeserved censure, or to deal out praise to the deserving with a niggard hand: but I am more jealous of the literary reputation of our country than of the fame of an individual. Let not, then, your correspondents misunderstand my motives, nor give to my intentions an improper coloring. It does not follow that I must be an enemy to *American Letters*, or unfriendly to their author, because I contradict your assertion of its perfection, and point out any little blemishes in style or composition. On the contrary, they injure what they would serve, who exaggerate the merits of a work, and give to it an imaginary rank to which its intrinsic value cannot entitle it.

CRITO.

For the Evening Fire-side.

"Sibi non cavere, et aliis consilium dare, stultum est."

Messrs. Editors,

We find in the third number of your paper, that your *philanthropic* correspondent, "W." in the early part of his career, has met with a *cross*, perhaps somewhat unexpected; but it is hoped that he will not be discouraged, as this which *seems* to thwart his plan, we conceive to be by no means *intolerable*, nor perhaps *invincible:* and although we are *all* advised to bear the cross, yet, to *this one*, you will permit us to make a few objections: *Sed tamen amoto quæramus seria ludo.*

The greatest part of the subject of our author turns upon this question: Are all men possessed of equal mental powers? and are they alike capable of improving them? On which quere "X." hesitates not to declare in the affirmative: This subject, indeed, has been much agitated in the literary world, and given rise to many learned and ingenious disquisitions; yet, in our humble opinion, it is not more difficult of solution than the following one;—Do all men possess, or are they capable of attaining, a like degree of strength and vigor in the corporeal functions?

Now we ask, in what do the laws of the mind differ from those of the body? The state or condition of the body depends upon the action of various external agents upon it; such as air; heat and cold; the various articles of diet; different modes of exercise, &c. To which may be added, the influence of the mind. And has not the mind also its rise, progress, and different degrees of perfection from external stimuli acting upon it through the medium of the senses, and the influence of the body? Now, as the kind, quantum, and force of the agents or stimuli, applied both to body and mind vary in every individual, so we shall find no two in every respect similar. Let "X." point out two bodies precisely the same in all their parts, and in all their functions; then, and not till then, will we shew him two minds alike in all their faculties and operations.

As many of those agents which act upon both body and mind, act from necessity, and not according to the will of the patient; and as their quantity, force, &c. acting upon each one, also differ from necessity, not choice, so we infer, that no person can, from any efforts of his will, arrive at any definite degree of perfection, either of body or mind; and which another person, from a variation of those acting powers, may attain to or exceed. The different states of the body, also, variously affect the mind, either in retarding or favoring its progress, independent of the will.

But, on the contrary, as the application and degree of force of numerous agents depend on the will of the patient; and as there are such amongst these which tend most to perfect both body and mind, so we infer that the improvement of man chiefly depends on the exercise of this voluntary power.

From the above reasons we conclude that the mental powers of all are not equal, nor have equal chances of improvement. Let "X." now bring forward his great "authorities," and prove the opinions or doctrines which he has so confidently affirmed to.

PHILOLOGICUS.

For the Evening Fire-side.

TRANSLATION OF HOR. LIB. II. OD. XVI.

"Otium Divos rogat in patenti."

TO GROSPHUS.

The seaman midst the howling waste,
When round the tempests roar;
When waves on waves impetuous haste,
To dash the sounding shore;

When darting from the murky clouds,
The moon a moment flies,
And quick succeeding darkness shrouds
Her glories from his eyes;

To heaven prefers the ardent pray'r,
To grant a sweet relief from care:
To bless with ease his throbbing heart,
And to his fainting soul the beams of Hope impart.

The furious Thracian braves the war,
Yet pants for peace once more;
The Medes upon their glitt'ring car,
For ease the gods implore.

Nor war, nor pomp, can e'er attain
The mind's serene repose;
They strive the fragrant sweets to gain,
But crush the op'ning rose.

Not sordid wealth, nor regal state,
The glitt'ring follies of the great,
Can still the tumult of the mind,
And leave the active fiend, fell discontent, behind.

That man is by the gods caress'd,
Whom no ambition fires:
By fortune with a little bless'd,
And limited desires.

Who sees upon his frugal board,
Its ancient goblet plac'd;
Drawn from his father's sacred hoard,
With antique sculpture grac'd.

No cares disturb his sweet repose,
When evening's shadows round him close,
No fearful dreams his rest annoy,
But all is peace within, and calm domestic joy.

Why should we waste the fleeting hours,
In fancy's idle dreams?—
Or why exhaust our feeble powers
In vain gigantic schemes?

An exile from his native home
May find another sky,
But from himself, Ah! can he roam,
Or hope from care to fly?—

No! swifter than the eastern gale,
When driving tempests rend the sail,
Care still his wand'ring steps attends,
And o'er his victim's head in every clime impends.

The mind content with present joy,
Will smile at fortune's power;
Nor let expected ills alloy,
The pleasures of the hour.

For none can boast of perfect bliss,
Within life's narrow bound;
And death presents its dark abyss,
To falling thousands round.

Achilles, first among the brave,
Sunk prematurely to the grave;
Tithonus' life prolong'd for years, in vain
Sought from the fatal stroke a short reprieve to gain.

On you, my friend, has fav'ring heaven
The gifts of fortune pour'd:
To me, perhaps, as kindly given
A humble, frugal board.

For you Scicilian Heifers low,
And flocks their fleeces yield;
On me unerring fates bestow
A single fruitful field:

Yet Fate, perhaps, may speed the dart,
That's doom'd to pierce thy gen'rous heart;
And from my lowly head refrain,
Till life is far prolong'd to poverty and pain.

LYRICUS.

For the Evening Fire-side.

DECEPTION.

Deception is one of those illiberal and speculative arts or stratagems which is practised by individuals to delude others. An individual, however, may so act, and make use of such means, in the accomplishment of an object, as will delude himself. This object, we may reasonably suppose, is an interesting one to the individual desiring it: though it does not follow that it is either reasonable, just, or, when obtained, conducive to happiness.—To elucidate the premises, we must take a view of results:

Persons possessing pliable dispositions are peculiarly obnoxious to this art. False representations of honor or emolument must, therefore, be made to enlist the unwary in a scheme apparently productive of a favorable issue. Incessant attention is employed by the agitators to divert the innocent from the real object in view. As the scheme ripens, the destined victims become intoxicated with the prospect before them, which renders them deaf to the admonitions of their real friends. At length the day arrives when the empty bubble bursts: their bright but visionary prospects vanish, and the deception appears in all its horrors. Although the perpetrators are known, they are now sheltered behind the ramparts erected for their own safety by the innocent hands of the deceived, who see nothing but their own defenceless and naked situation, with inevitable destruction staring them in the face. Thus do some men, by deception, attain to power and influence; draw celebrity from evil deeds, and leave posterity no other marks of their greatness but the remembrance of their vices. It is a gloomy and distressing picture to see honesty and virtue thus rewarded with poverty—deception and knavery, with honor and with wealth. Indeed, if this principle were legalized by the public sanction, he who committed treason would be the honorable, and the murderer the just man. The various struggles in the political world brings afresh to recollection the baseness of this art, which verifies the observation of Addison, that "the post of honor is a private station." Innumerable instances in other concerns of life might be quoted, but let what has been written, suffice to caution against the practice of a vice so detested by the good and wise, so destructive to the peace and happiness of individuals, and so dangerous to the liberty of any people.

PITTACUS.

Delaware, 18th January, 1806.

For the Evening Fire-side.

"HABIT is second nature," and often is the reason for our continuing to suffer inconvenience, and not unfrequently absolute pain, rather than make the requi-

site exertion to emancipate ourselves from its fetters.

Opinion also governs us: not *our* opinions, neither, but the opinions of *others*; nor do those ideas always concur with our interest, or the benefit of others: on the contrary, they are frequently at varience with both.

I was led into these reflections while sitting in my parlour by my close stove, where, at a small expence of fuel, I enjoy a more comfortable warmth than is obtained by a common fire side, at this cold season, by a consumption of thrice the fuel. Here I partake of an equability of temperature; there is no part of my parlour where a visitant cannot enjoy himself; he is not compelled to fry his shins and scorch his face to keep the blood of his back in circulation, as he is not annoyed by those cold streams of air, so common in rooms where open fire places are made use of, and which are so prejudicial to comfort and health. Nor are these all my blessings arising from a ten plate stove; the pipe is carried through my chamber, and renders it quite comfortable. When I retire to rest, I do not shiver with cold; when I rise in the morning, a renewal of the fire below has prepared the chamber for dressing with comfort, and I am not oppressed when a-bed, by a dozen blankets, or as many coverlets.

"But I cannot bear the heat of a stove," says one neighbor. "I abominate them," says another: "they look so ugly; nasty black things, they spoil the looks of a parlour." "They are not fashionable," says a third: "Mr. such a one, or Mrs. such another, has none, and I would sooner, for my part, so I would, have my toes frozen, than introduce one into my house." And so, my dear friend, you cannot bear the heat of a stove: and why? if the air is too dry, put a bason of water on your stove; if it is too warm, open the window or door, or moderate the fire. But what shall I say to make an "abominable thing" look handsome? By speaking of its utility; by proving that the parlour is by it in effect enlarged, as every portion of it is made habitable by the warmth it communicates. "But I like the looks of a comfortable fire." Aye, and by looking at a comfortable fire you spoil a pair of fine eyes, and a fine complection too, by the streams of keen air you suffer, which are productive of colds, by destroying the equilibrium of circulation. But, my fashionable neighbor, what shall I do with your objection, while you build your opinions on those of Mr. Spendthrift and of Mrs. Sprightly? I can hardly hope to convince you without converting them: and while you have the courage to brave "the pelting of the pitiless storm," with your sleeves tucked up to your shoulders, and your elbows frozen as black as negro Sam's, I have no hope you will think the article of comfort of any consequence in your vocabulary. And is the economy of fuel of no consequence? Suppose I burn four cords of wood while you burn twelve; is the saving of forty dollars per annum nothing? If I can afford the expence, thousands in this city cannot; and every cord of wood saved, has a tendency to keep down the price for the convenience, yes for the existence of those who can scarcely purchase one.

Although, having overcome some prejudices, I obtain comfort as a compensation, yet I am far from enjoying all that is practicable to derive from such a source. Many houses in the city have their kitchens in the cellar. If we suppose such a kitchen to be supplied with a stove calculated to roast, bake, and boil for the family, an ornamental pipe from such a stove, carried through the back (or other convenient) part of the parlour above, and thence through the chambers, would render them all comfortable, without any addition to the fuel necessary for the purposes of cooking. It would be a fortunate circumstance for the community if some persons, capable of giving a tone to the fashions of the fashionable world, would turn their attention to economy and comfort on this point. If Mr. Spanglewit or Madame Beaumonde would invite their dinner or card parties to rooms warmed by invisible fire, it must soon be the rage of the day, and a saving of 20,000 cords of wood per annum in this city; would pay all its taxes, and leave a surplus for private charity, or any thing else.

A PROJECTOR.

For the Evening Fire-side.

TO THE MEMORY OF SALLY THURSTON.

How could'st thou, Parent Nature, thus resign,
In life's fair morn, that lovely flower of thine?
How thus relinquish that unsullied bloom,
Those spotless beauties, to th' insatiate Tomb?
See its fair texture thus to Death a prey,
And turn with coward haste thy steps away!
See him, thy fav'rite offspring, thus invade,
And thus refuse her thy maternal aid!
Say, genial Sun! if in thy annual round
A Fairer, Purer, Lovelier, thou hast found?
Say, evening Cynthia! Boundless Ocean's Queen,
A nymph more mild, more charming, hast thou seen
On all the shores thy waves encircle? say,
Has one more lovely hail'd thy silver ray?
Then while she hastens to a longer night,
O why refuse thy sweetly soothing light?
Did envy seize thee, when thou brightest shone,
Lest her mild radiance should outshine thy own?
Fear'd you, ye flowers, your charms in hers to lose,
That ye your varied tints and scents refuse?
Ah! no; for her the flow'rs luxuriant grew,
And the glad breeze with all her odours blew.
The sweetness of her eyes could not inspire
Corroding Envy's rane'rous, livid fire.
Nor could'st thou, Nature, unconcern'd, behold
The shades of sickness thy lov'd charge enfold.
Long didst thou strive to quell the gath'ring storm
Whose thickening gloom thy fairest hopes deform.
With healing plants replenish'd every plain,
And woo'd Hygea's friendly aid in vain.
Yes, thou hast strove to avert th' impending rod;
But Nature must submit to Nature's God:
And He, who views the universal plan,
Sees what contributes to the bliss of Man;
Sees where our hopes from happiness would stray,
And o'er the ruin leads a safer way.
Perhaps he saw the noxious stream of woe
Obscure her fate, and with life's current flow;
Saw the future griefs and future snares arise,
That might impede her passage to the skies—
And took her spotless from our longing arms
In all the blooming pride of vernal charms.
His aid alone can brighter hopes secure;
Can cheer the vale that Nature leaves obscure:
Can lead her, smiling, to the opening tomb,
Deprive the tyrant of his native gloom,
Bid him the aspect of an Angel wear,
Place Heaven in view, and guide her spirit there.
There, safely rescued from the cares of life,
From Hope's faint gleam, and sorrow's endless strife
While flowers unfading round thy temples twine,
And the pure joys of Paradise are thine,
O, let us still thy heighten'd friendship share,
Attend our footsteps with a guardian's care.
Let those whom life's inconstant hopes deceive,
A timely warning from thy fate receive:
And while they sport in youth's uncertain bloom,
Teach them this lesson from thy early tomb:—
That all the gifts that Nature can bestow,
That all the Joys incautious youth can know,
Cannot the certain grasp of Death withstand,
Nor wrest the weapon from his unrelenting hand:
Cannot their vot'ries from his terrors save,
Nor lend one comfort to the opening grave.
Religion only can our fears beguile,
Alone can make our future prospects smile;
Prepare the spirit for the bliss above,
And re-unite us to the friends we love.

EMMA.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

The Sect of Sosions, in Persia.

The reports of distant travellers are listened to with an almost universal attention, and with much propriety. Th

mutual acquaintance of remote nations, like that of individuals, lays the foundation of a beneficial commerce, and of a pleasing intercourse for the purposes of a reciprocation of civilities, as well as of the respective improvements of those nations in science and experience. That natural and instinctive prejudice which men have towards persons but little known to them, is observed gradually to wear off upon further acquaintance; and they afterwards wonder why they had not before liked those who are now found to be so agreeable to them. It were well, if the clashing interests of the world were never suffered to interrupt this pleasing harmony; and men were left at liberty freely to investigate and impart, whatever might be found to be on either side beneficial or instructive to the other.

Travellers make their reports according to the interest they take in the different departments of observation. Some travel to amass science and information in countries more improved than their own; and on their return, report accordingly: others give nice details upon the fine arts, or agriculture, or the state of manners and civilization prevalent abroad; and some, of the state of religious improvement that they discover to exist; and all these reports are received by the public, with an avidity proportionate to the interest that individuals take in those diverse topics. Serious persons will therefore listen to any information that brings them into an acquaintance with the religious habits of distant people, however different these may severally be in their respective modes of faith and practice.

The following extract is made from a late publication, entitled "The Asiatic Researches." They are the result of a laborious investigation into the literature and manners of the Oriental nations, and proceed from a body of learned and judicious persons of the first respectability, whose veracity is not to be questioned.

"A religious sect," say these Researchers, "exist in Persia, who are called *Sosian;* which is a Persian word, signifying *pious, intelligent, spiritual.* They wear mean clothing, made of wool; and exhibit humility. They appropriate a certain portion of time in reading; in the acquisition of knowledge; in viewing the beauties of nature, and in meditating on the works and attributes of God. Some of them, who dedicate the chief part of their time to silent retirement, seek in an abnegation of the world and of self, the enjoyment of a spiritual intercourse with the Supreme Being.

"A sentiment of theirs is, 'that a man is to be valued according to what he himself esteems. If he esteems the world, he himself is not estimable; for the world is not. If he esteems the life to come, and the things pertaining thereto, Heaven is his price. But if he estimates God above all things, his own value is then inestimable.'

"One of these persons addressed the Almighty after this manner:—'One man asks of thee, O Lord, the enjoyment of Paradise; and another earnestly prays thee for deliverance from hell and punishments; but *I* entreat thee for neither the one nor the other of these. I only desire thee, O Lord, that in me thy will may be accomplished.'"

Pompey's fiust Lukebrashun, dedekated to the Editors of the Evening Fire-side.

GENTLEMEN,

i feel a good deal okard in taking hold of the pen to address you, and i am afrade that my riting will be so bad, when i have done, that you will not be able to read it. But i gess, that after you hav herd what i am goin to sa, you will redily excuse it—to tel you i am not a grate scollar, is useless, but to let you know why i am not so is nessary: so ile begin, i was born on the eastern shore of Maryland, wher i lived till i was 28 years of age; i was kep perty hard at hoin corn, tobaco, and such like work til i left there; of corse i dident go to skule one day all the time i livd there. You no, i spose, that its not *every one* that gits an edecashun in maryland. One day while i was in the felde, a sertin Jeffery Blakbutes that had come from fildelfi, came to me; this Jeffery was koachman for a gentlemun that had cum down on a visit: now Jeffery had not bin long with me, before he began to tell what fine times he had in fildelfi, and how much esier a man may live in town than in the country: this soon put me in the noshun of going to fildelfe, for i never much liked hard work, so off i set in a few days after, with an idee of gitten a plase in sum gentlemun's familee, where i mout hav a chance of seein a little of high-life, and larn to talk and behave as much like a gentleman as Jeffery Blackbutes. In 4 days from the time i had the talk with Jeffery, i was in this mity big sitty, wel ficksed in a verry gentele familee, where i stil live, waiting and tending. Here i have made what little improvement i cud in larnin, when i hav had lessure, and by a perty regular attendance of a nite skule kep by a societe of yung quaker gentlemen in Willin's Allee, i have larned to rede tolable wel, and rite as you here see; you may preseve by this account i giv of myself, that i hav not had as good a chance as sum fokes to becum a skollar: but i only tel you this by way of exkuse for my poor komposishun and ritin: i feel verry ful of gratitude for what larnin ive got at the skule before menshuned, for i consider it a grate bessin to me; but there is one other matter that i think is a rather grater one, and i beleve i may thank you for it; to be shure Jeffery Blackbutes indused me to cum to town, but here i mout hav lived and died in obskurity, if it hadent bin for your paper, the Fire-side. For tho' i never thought i wanted understanding, yet for all that, i was quite ignorent of my abilities, until the other day, when i had a chans of hereing a dispute betwene too yung gentlemen, one a doctor and the other a lawyer, who live in the same familee i do, and on whom i have the honor of wateing: the okkashun of it was this: your Fire-side havin bin throne into our entre, the Doktor cuming in, took it up, and begun to rede it, and havin met with sumthing that dident agree with his noshuns, he took okkashun at tea to speke about it; he sed that you had published sumthing that seemd to hint, that all men are alike as to natral kapisity, and that all this, and that, about one man's beeing supereor to another, in pint of sence, was nuthing but a humbug, and so forth; ascerting at the same time, that it was not true; and that he wundred at you, Mr. Eds, for suffering such erroneous noshuns to go forth into the world; espessially as there was such a vast boddy of evedense to kontradict them. The lawyer immeditely differed with him in opinyun, when strateway a warm debate began, the former insisting on the correctnes of what you sa, and the latter denying it: a number of arguments wer brot on both sides, and the longer they talked, the higher they got, when at last the Doktor wound up by saing that he knew it to be a fakt that there was an absolute difference of nature's own makin, and any one that had had as much to du with skulls as he had, could not fail to be convinsd of it. Do you no, sed he, that the skul of a wise man

is as thin as a wafer, while that of a fool is as thik as a kallerbash? this you may depend upon to be a fakt; and hence the origin of the term *thik skull*, to denote a dolt. Now here, sure, if you beleve me, is a striking differense, which if you have been ignorant of, may serve as sum apology for your stubornnes; but if you stil persist in manetaneing your fust position, i cant help suspectting you to be 1 of the latter deskription:—Hold, hold, ses the lawyer, til i ax you 1 question: Wood you beleve that fire mite be struck out of the stones in the strete, if you had never seen it dun? i verrily beleve you wood not; on the kontrary, ime konfident that you wood trete such an opinyun with the same kontempt as the 1 above alluded to, and that, too, with equal justis. Tis a folly, i tel you, to ascert that a man must be born with a jenious, or that he never can hav 1 afterward: as wel mite you sa, that a man must be born with a beard, or that he wood always be without one. You are rong, my frend, in suspecting that a man is destitute of jenious, because you cant diskover it. It ofen lies dorment from a variete of kauses, and rarely or never diskovers itself, but by accident: for instence, the apple falling onto the hed of Sur Isak Nutown, as he sat under a tree in his orcherd, gave rise to that trane of thought, which terminated in a devellopement of the laus which guvern the universe. Now, if Sur Isak had not bin sittin just where he was, or if the apple had not fallen when it did, is it not rashunal to suppose, that we should stil be in ignorance with respect to those diskoveries? and that Sur Isak wood hav bin konsiderd as thik heded a man, as he had bin a boy? that this is a natrul konklusion, i trust you will not deny; so that you see, it is all accident, accident, nothing but accident. Now gentlemen, to be short, i may tell you, the lawyer had all but won me over to his way of thinkin, when he took up the Fire-side, and red sumthing in it perty loud, which i found exactly to agree with what he had bin saing, and as he went on, i found my hare rize, and my flesh krepe agin, to here the glad tidings he proclaimed from your paper: when he had finished, they were both silent, when I left the rume kompletely convinsed that you and the lawyer were rite. I now no longer konsidered myself that servile biped I had always dun before: but, ful of that konshusnes of dignity which every one must posses to be a man, I retired to my chamber, saying, this is the accident, the glorious accident, which is to raise me to fame.—Now, sed I, let them that chuse to rub handirons, and clean candlesticks, do it; i will from this time strain every nerve to mortallize my name, and as the karakter of an author is above all others the most desirable, i will bend my whole soul to this object; i will begin immedeutly to rite lukybrashuns. So now Mr's. Editors, here i am seeted for the purpus, and feeling myself under greater obligashuns to you than all the world besides, I wil dedikate my first one to you;—as you hav caused my genious to sprout, you hav the best rite to the frute of it, and I expect there will be a great yield, provided you dont nip it in the bud. I hav it in kontemplashun to rite a book, in order to prove that an ideot is a nonentity, and that there is no gradation in soul, as is falsely believed, but "that all men are alike kapable of great attainments." If you are filanthropists, which I trust you are, I have very little dout of your incouragement in the prosekushun of so nessary a work; and I should be very happy if I could pursuade you to review it as soon as published, for I understand you are *excellent revuers*; and I want nothing but a fare chance for fame at the tribunal of public opinyun. This I wish you to konsider only as a short ackount of the manner in which my genous was brot to lite; how it is likely to be directed, and how thankful I am to you, M'sters Editors, for the benefit you hav been to me, and will no dout be to mankind ginnerly.—I am, with sentiments of the most profound respekt, your most obedent and very humble sarvent,

POMPEY.

Fildelfi, Jenewary 1806.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

Although our sources of political intelligence have furnished us with n thing of moment during the two last weeks, our letter-box has been more productive. We have now the satsfaction of presenting our readers with a Number of the "Miscellany" entirely original, with the confident expectation that it will be more pleasing to them than a detail of battles, or the minutiæ of diplomatic intercourse.

A Summary of Intelligence will be attended to in future. as the history of interesting events come to our kn wledge, for the gratification of such of our re ders as do not receive such information through the medium of other papers

We have this week received a communication from each of our friends, OLIVE-BRANCH and MYRTLE; both of which we have thought prudent to suppress, lest the humorous contention of these rival bards should be prolonged too far for the patience of some of our serious readers, and the pacific intentions of the authors. In this decision we have certainly practised the virtue of self-denial, and devoutly hope it will not check the effusions of the mirthful muse.

AYEMBEE'S communication, dated the 1st day of the present year, has been put into our hands, together with several other productions, mentioned in his *private note*, all of which we think it an act of friendship to withhold from the public; and we believe that the stanza left out of his first piece, was rejected by our predecessors from the same motive

VERVIATUS'S *penetration*, if he will be so condescending as to exercise it. may enable him to discover that the piece he alludes to, is introduced into our last number, as a selection. He might also, by the use of the above-mentioned valuable quality, have perceived that it was the tedious, uninteresting properties of his first communication, that were objectionable. It was not rejected on account of the quantum of room it would have occupied, but because it would have occupied it to no purpose

Some Selections have been received, which have already apeared in this paper Those who favor us with communications, in future, are requested to be particular in distinguishing selected from Original pieces, as it is improbable that we should in all cases be qualified to detect selections, when sent us as originals.

We think that our Anecdote-Monger,
And he whose *bright parts* we admire,
Meaning TABITHA STARCHBACK the younger
And SOLOMON GUNDY, Esquire,
Have talents for charming each other;
And as they have shar'd the same fate,
If Oblivion's confines don't smother
Affection——perhaps they may mate.

C.'s poetry was on our list for insertion this week, but was accidentally mislaid, and remained undiscovered until our paper was completed.

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